

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 11-127297 to Tanimoto.

Summary of Response to the Office Action

Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections and the Office Action's interpretation of the applied references, and respectfully request reconsideration of this application, withdrawal of all rejections, and the timely allowance of all pending claims.

All Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

In the Office Action, claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 11-127297 to Tanimoto. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims for at least the following reasons.

(i). Independent claims 1, 4, 6, and 8:

With respect to independent claim 1, Applicants respectfully assert that Tanimoto does not teach or suggest a combination including control means which determines whether or not the attribute information and the image data are arranged in a predetermined sequence from the header information received by the communications means, and if determined to be arranged in the predetermined sequence, the image data is immediately decompressed. The Office Action page 3 alleges that "Tanimoto discloses at paragraphs [0034]-[0038] that the electronic mail is received by the system and stored in memory, a TIFF is extracted and analyzed to determine if the header information is in a predetermined sequence, and the image is decompressed (converted to dot data) if the system judges the arrangement to be correctly sequenced. Thus, the

reference of Tanimoto does disclose control means which immediately decompresses the image data included in the image information when the attribute and the image data are determined to be arranged in the predetermined sequence and therefore the claim limitation is anticipated by the reference.” Applicants respectfully disagree.

In accordance with the presently claimed invention, the “control means” determines whether or not the attribute information and the image data are arranged in a predetermined sequence from the header information received by the communications means. In contrast to the Applicants’ claimed invention, paragraphs [0034]-[0038] of Tanimoto teach that step 5 (alleged to be a control means) is used to judge whether the offset value in the instant image file directory points to the appropriate byte address within the given TIFF file. When it is judged that the offset value does not point to the appropriate byte address, then the step 5 acknowledges that the instant image file directory is not followed by the image data which corresponds to that image file directory and this image data is stored in the image memory 8. When it is judged that the offset value points to the appropriate byte address, then the instant image file directory is read and the image data is decompressed. Thus, this processing of the offset value in Tanimoto is different than determining whether the incoming attribute information and the image data has a known predetermined order. Further, as described in paragraphs [0007] to [0010] of Tanimoto, encoded image data is once stored in image memory and then it is read from the image memory and decoded. Thus, Tanimoto does not disclose determining whether or not attribute information and image data are arranged in a predetermined sequence from header information and that the image data is immediately decompressed. However, by using the claimed invention, it is

possible to shorten a time if attribute information and image data are arranged in the predetermined sequence.

Applicants respectfully submit that the inventions of claims 4, 6, and 8 are distinguished over Tanimoto for reasons similar to those presented above with respect to independent claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that Tanimoto does not teach or suggest at least the features of independent claims 1, 4, 6 and 8, thus, Tanimoto fails to anticipate at least the independent claims 1, 4, 6 and 8.

(ii). Independent claims 2, 5, 7 and 9:

With respect to independent claim 2, as previously presented, Applicants respectfully submit that Tanimoto does not teach or suggest a combination including control means which stores information indicating that attribute information and image data are arranged in a predetermined sequence into header information. The Office Action on page 4 alleges that Tanimoto discloses the conversion between the two formats. Specifically, “the system converts the data into a TIFF format containing header information and image data (paragraph [0030], lines 1-4). The header information and image data are arranged in a predetermined sequence that will be checked after the data is received, converted to dot data, and finally printed out ([0034]-[0038]). Thus, there is a negotiation between the electronic mail service and the facsimile device to transfer the data, change the data into TIFF format, made up of header information and image data, and determine if the TIFF format is in a predetermined sequence, upon which if it is judged to be correctly sequenced, the data is converted into dot data for ultimate output.” Applicants respectfully disagree.

In accordance with the presently claimed invention, information (such as an additional signal) is stored in the header information to indicate that the image data has the data in the known predetermined order. **Applicants respectfully assert that Tanimoto does not disclose storing any such information in the header.** Instead, in contrast to the Applicants' claimed invention, Tanimoto at paragraph [0028]–[0030] teaches the facsimile device adapted to create TIFF files having a data in a known order and adapted to send such TIFF files to the network.

Applicants respectfully submit that the inventions of claims 5, 7 and 9 are distinguished over Tanimoto for reasons similar to those presented above with respect to independent claim 2. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that Tanimoto does not teach or suggest at least the features of independent claims 2, 5, 7 and 9, thus, Tanimoto fails to anticipate at least independent claims 2, 5, 7 and 9.

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Thus, in light of the arguments presented above, Applicants respectfully request that rejection of claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn because Tanimoto fails to anticipate at least the features of independent claims 1, 2 and 4-9. Furthermore, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claim 3 is not anticipated by Tanimoto because of its dependency from respective independent claim 2.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application, withdrawal of all rejections, and the timely allowance of all pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.R.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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